

Message Text

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S E C R E T PRETORIA 4938

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: CHIKEREMA WILLING TO COME TO ALL -PARTIES
MEETING

1. JAMS CHKEREMA ACCEPTED GRAHAM'S AND MY INVITATION FOR
A TALK AT MY HOTEL. THE LENGTHY CONVERSATION WAS FRIENDLY
AND PRODUCTIVE.

2. CHIKEREMA SAID THAT FOLLOWING OUR LUNCH TOGETHER A MONTH
OR SO AGO, HE HAD THOUGH A GREAT DEAL ABOUT OUR PROPOSAL FOR
AN ALL PARTIES MEETING. HE HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE MATTER
BE DISCUSSED AT A COMBINED MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ASKING THAT A FIRM POSITION
BE TAKEN TOWARDS A MEETING. THE DISCUSSION WAS HELD BUT
THE RESULTS, HE SAID, WERE INCONCLUSIVE. THOUGH HE SAW THE
ADVANTAGES OF A MEETING HE WAS STILL CONCERNED ABOUT THE
EXTREME DEMANDS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.

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3. I TOLD HIM I THOUGH THAT MOST PUBLIC SPEECHES AT THIS
STAGE BY VARIOUS LEADERS WERE DIRECTED CHIEFLY AT THEIR OWN
FOLLOWERS RATHER THAN AT OTHER PARTIES IN THE DISCUSSION.

AS A RESULT, THERE WAS A FAIR AMOUNT OF POSTURING AND TAKING
OF POSITION WHICH DID NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT ILTIMATE

BARGAINING POSITIONS AT A MEETING. I DESCRIBED AT SOME LENGTH OUR THINKING THAT IF SMITH WAS WILLING TO MAKE SOME FAIRLY SIGNIFICANT CONCESSIONS TOWARDS MODIFICATION OF THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT, (I.E., MAKING IT IRRESVERSIBLE THROUGH AMENDING THE 69 CONSTITUTION, AGREEING TO INTEGRATION OF THE ARMED FORCES ALONG THE LINES OF OUR PROPOSAL AND MODIFYING THE 28 PERCENT REPRESENTATION OF WHITES IN THE PARLIAMENT UNDER THE INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION) THEN, I BELIEVE, THE FRONT LINE WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT A SERIOUS SETTLEMENT PROPOSAL WAS POSSIBLE. BECAUSE OF A REAL DESIRE TO SEE A SETTLEMENT IN BOTH ZAMBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE, THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS, I BELIEVE, WOULD EXERT THEIR INFLUENCE TO SEE THE EXTREME DEMANDS FOR DOMINANCE FOR THE TRANSITION PERIOD OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD BE MODIFIED. CHIKEREMA PICKED UP THE POINT ON INTEGRATION OF THE ARMED FORCES AND LISTENED CAREFULLY AS BOTH GRAHAM AND I OUTLINED IN DETAIL LORD CARVER'S PROPOSAL FOR CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENCE ARMY AND MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD.

4. WE DESCRIBED TO CHIKEREMA THE IMPORTANCE OF PROCEEDING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO A MEETING WHILE ONE WAS STILL POSSIBLE. WE THEN DISCUSSED POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR THE MEETING. WE OUTLINED FOR CHIKEREMA THE MANY ADVANTAGES OF LUANGWA IN ZAMBIA AS A SIGHT: ITS CONVENIENT LOCATION, PRIVACY FROM THE PRESS, AND,

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PARTICULARLY, THE ABILITY TO HAVE PRESENT NOT AT THE CONFERENCE ITSELF BUT IN LUSAKA, FRONT-LINE REPRESENTATIVES WHO COULD PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE IN INFLUENCING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. THOUGH HE WAS TAKEN BACK AT FIRST BY THE SUGGESTION OF LUANGWA, HE LISTENED CAREFULLY AND SEEMED IMPRESSED BY THE ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF IT. THEN HE SAID THAT IF HOLDING IT IN ZAMBIA COULD LEAD TO A POSITIVE EFFORT ON THE PART OF PRESIDENT KAUNDA TO WORK FOR AN IMPARTIAL SETTLEMENT, THEN THERE WOULD BE AN ADVANTAGE TO HOLDING IT THERE. WE REVIEWED WITH HIM THE OTHER POSSIBLE LOCATIONS AND DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN EACH.

5. IN RESPONSE TO OUR QUESTIONS, CHIKEREMA SAID HE THOUGH THE BISHOP WOULD COME TO A MEETING: "HE HAS NO CHOICE". CHIKEREMA SAID THAT HE DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH THE BISHOP LAST WEEK. WHILE MUZOREWA DOES NOT WANT TO COME, HE RECOGNIZES THAT HE IS IN A DIFFICULT POSITION EITHER WAY AND CHIKEREMA SUGGESTED THAT GRAHAM AND I HAVE ANOTHER MEETING WITH MUZOREWA. CHKEREMA RECOGNIZES HIMSELF THAT THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT GROUP IS IN A WEAK POSITION AS LONG AS IT MAINTAINS ITS REFUSAL TO GO TO A MEETING. HE SAID THE POEPL E OF THE COUNTRY BOTH BLACK AND WHITE

ARE NOW OVERWHELMINGLY IN FAVOR OF A MEETING. HE SAID
HE HIMSELF WAS NOW FULLY IN FAVOR OF IT AS WELL AS GABELLAH
AND IAN AND DAVID SMITH. THE OTHERS, HE SAID, WOULD SOON COME
ALONG. HE WAS NOT SURE THE MEETING COULD SUCCEED BUT HE
RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF TRYING.

5. COMMENT: AS WE HAVE SEEN MORE AND MORE OF HIM,
CHIKEREMA HAS BECOME VERY DIFFERENT IN HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS
US. HE NOW POSES THE QUESTIONS THAT BOTHER HIM AND LISTENS
CAREFULLY TO OUR ANSWERS AS THOUGH HE WERE SEEKING AMMUNITION
AND ARGUMENTS TO ALLAY HIS OWN FEARS AND USE IN HIS DISCUSSIONS
WITH OTHERS. HE TAKES A MUCH MORE POSITIVE AND UNEMOTIONAL
ATTITUDE TOWARDS FRONT-LINE PRESIDENTS, AND PARTICULARLY
KAUNDA, THAN DOES HIS CHIEF MUZOREWA. HE COULD BE
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HELPFUL AT AN ALL-PARTIES MEETING.
EDMONDSON

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